

**Mount Vernon Master Plan**  
**Development Committee Meeting**  
March 22, 2012

**Meeting Minutes**

1. Infill Development Massing Studies

- a. Conor Brady with consultant architects Cho Benn Holback + Associates
- b. Preliminary analysis of existing regulations
- c. Preliminary analysis of 2 of the 5 selected sites
  - i. Site 1
  - ii. Site 2
- d. Discussion/feedback
  - i. General

- 1. The massing studies only anticipate providing off-street parking for the new development, not replacing the existing number of off-street parking spaces on existing surface parking lots, in an effort to most accurately reflect a developer's approach to the development of these sites.
- 2. Are the off-street parking requirements through TransForm Baltimore appropriate?
  - a. Is the requirement for commercial uses too high?
  - b. Is the requirement for office uses high enough?
  - c. Is the requirement for residential dwellings too high?
    - i. "Open question" - need results of parking study to answer this
  - d. Should surface parking be permitted along a primary frontage, even if it is screened?
- 3. You essentially lose a floor of usable area within the height limits for new construction because height is defined to include rooftop mechanical, elevator override, etc..
- 4. Can you apply the infill development requirements for residentially zoned rowhouses (from TransForm) to rowhouses with commercial or office-residential zoning as well?
- 5. Can all surface parking fronting on main streets be prohibited in Mount Vernon? Or in O-R-2 and C-2 since those are the primary proposed zoning districts for Mount Vernon?
- 6. Note: These comments relate to the draft new Zoning Code under TransForm Baltimore and will be addressed by Laurie Feinberg at the URP working session on May 12.

ii. Site 1






- 1. Since the property is proposed for O-R-2 zoning, commercial use should not be shown on the first floor.
- 2. A 10ft rear yard setback is required under the proposed O-R-2 zoning, but in order to get a full three bays of parking the massing study assumes that a variance for the rear yard would be obtained. However, the residential tower is set back in accordance with the rear yard setback on the upper floors.

3. The setback of the residential tower along the property lines is in excess of what is required under the propose zoning and in the building code, but this allows for additional windows/light on these side walls and the proposed residential floor plate is very efficient.
- iii. Site 2
  1. Since the property is proposed for O-R-2 zoning, commercial use should not be shown on the first floor.
  2. Height
    - a. The massing study exceeds the heights of the buildings on either side of it, but this is allowable under CHAP's design guidelines because it is not a continuous block face, but rather separated by alleys on both sides.
    - b. As a practical matter it seems unlikely that the development on this site would exceed ground level office/commercial with four stories of stick built residential above (5 stories total, similar to 1209 N Charles) because of the higher construction costs associated with high rise construction for such a small site.
    - c. Would the scale of development explored by the massing study cast shadows across Preston Street? If this were a concern it could be raised through the CHAP process.
  3. The setback of the residential tower along the property lines is in excess of what is required under the propose zoning and in the building code, but this allows for additional windows/light on these side walls and the proposed residential floor plate is very efficient.
- iv. Discussion of assumptions on other sites that haven't been looked at yet
  1. Site 3
    - a. Explore the development potential both on its own and in conjunction with the adjacent building at the corner of Chase because they are owned by the same owner currently.
      - i. Eric from CHAP believes that you could make a good argument that the rear portion of the corner building is not contributing and could be demolished, but a final determination would need to go to the Commission.
  2. Site 4
    - a. Look at development potential of 4b on its own and 4a and 4b if they were developed together.
    - b. Only look at development potential of 4a alone if there are sufficient funds at the end on the contract.
  3. Site 5
    - a. Off-street parking is not required in the proposed C-1 zoning.

## 2. Overview of Existing Regulations

- a. Zoning
  - i. TransForm Baltimore Zoning Code rewrite/remapping initiative discussed at 2/28 meeting
- b. CHAP Local Historic District regulations (Eric Holcomb)
  - i. CHAP Design Guidelines
  - ii. CHAP Mount Vernon Design Guidelines for New Construction

- c. Urban Renewal Plan (Alex Hoffman)
    - i. Mount Vernon Urban Renewal Plan
- 3. Issues with existing regulations
  - a. Many layers of regulation leads to a lack of clarity
  - b. Past conflicts between CHAP and URP regulations
    - i. Signage
    - ii. Awnings
  - c. Past conflicts between recommendations of ARC and URP requirements
  - d. Redundant regulations are inefficient
  - e. Discussion
    - i. Department of Planning is generally looking to streamline the development process citywide by incorporating the “best of” of the URPs into the new Zoning Code and then repeal URPs or amend them where they are needed for acquisition and disposition only.
      - 1. The height limits are already included in the new Zoning Code
    - ii. There may be the potential, subject to Commission approval, to move some of the content from the Mount Vernon URP into the CHAP Mount Vernon Design Guidelines for New Construction.
    - iii. Need to go through the URP together to determine what content should be retained and what is not necessary, then discuss where to house these regulations – a follow up working session has been scheduled.
    - iv. Some concerns were expressed about having sufficient protections through the CHAP process – MVBA will propose changes as necessary for the consideration of the Commission to address these concerns.
- 4. Next Steps
  - a. A follow-up meeting with consultant architects to review massing studies at 90% level for comment has been scheduled for **April 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm**
  - b. A working session to review the URP in depth has been scheduled for **May 12<sup>th</sup> at 9am**

-  Mount Vernon CHAP Historic District
-  Park Property
- Contributing Structures**
  -  Contributing
  -  Non-Contributing Lots
  -  Non-Contributing Buildings



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